



# News Release

## WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Public Affairs Office  
2400 Wright Street  
Madison, WI 53704

Contact: Lt. Col. Tim Donovan  
608-242-3050

Dec. 10, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Lt. Gov. Lawton to honor National Guard Challenge Academy graduates

Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton will address the 11th graduating class of the Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy and will present their commencement certificates at a ceremony Saturday, Dec. 13, at Mauston High School. Parents, relatives, mentors, and friends will also be on hand to celebrate the success of 78 teenagers whose lives have been changed by completing the course. The cadets come from 35 counties throughout the state.

The goal of the academy is to re-shape the lives of 16-to-18-year-olds who are at risk for problems as they enter adulthood. The program uses a structured, military-style environment to build cadets' self-confidence, leadership skills, and personal discipline.

A typical Challenge Academy day lasts from 5:15 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., with classroom work, community service, physical fitness and team activities. Cadets spend about four hours each day in classes to learn basic math, reading and writing skills. Classes are taught by state-certified teachers.

The Academy curriculum also includes a career skills and exploration program, health and drug abuse awareness, leadership, discipline and physical fitness.

Upon graduating from the 22-week course, each cadet is paired with a mentor in the cadet's hometown. The mentors meet regularly with the cadet to offer guidance and encouragement, and to keep the cadet's new life on track.

Twenty-five states offer similar programs nationwide. More than 35,000 teens have successfully completed National Guard youth programs since 1993. More than 90 percent of cadets who finish the program receive their high school equivalency diploma (HSED), and more than 80 percent stay out of trouble with the law.

The Challenge Academy will begin its next 22-week class Jan. 16, 2004. That class will graduate on June 12, 2004. Applications are available for future classes by contacting the Challenge Academy at (608) 269-4605.

# # # #

**NOTE: News media representatives are also welcome to attend. The graduation ceremony begins at 12:00 noon, preceded by a drill team performance at 11:15, at Mauston High School Gym, 800 Grayside Ave., Mauston. Graduates come from 35 Wisconsin counties:**

Brown	3	Florence	1	Marathon	1	Rock	3
Burnett	1	Fond du Lac	1	Marinette	2	Shawano	1
Chippewa	2	Green	3	Milwaukee	8	Sheboygan	2
Columbia	3	Jackson	1	Monroe	5	Vernon	3
Crawford	3	Jefferson	1	Ozaukee	1	Walworth	1
Dane	4	Juneau	3	Polk	1	Washington	1
Dodge	6	Kenosha	1	Portage	2	Waukesha	5
Dunn	1	Manitowoc	2	Racine	1	Waushara	1
		Marquette	1	Winnebago	1	Wood	2